interviews with

GEORGES IBRAHIM ABDALLAH

Richard Medhurst, "Inside the Mind of a Militant: An Exclusive Interview with Georges Abdallah"

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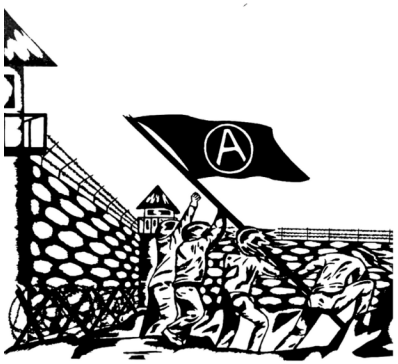
with whatever weapons at hand



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Inside the Mind of a Militant: An Exclusive Interview with Georges Abdallah

September 13, 2025

My name is Richard Medhurst. I'm here in Lebanon with Georges Abdallah, former prisoner, international revolutionary, Lebanese Marxist.

Georges, how are you? And thank you for having us.

Thank you for being here. I'm doing well, especially now that I'm free, after having spent quite some time behind bars. I'm in good physical shape. My country is doing well, and our Resistance is strong, so I'm in good spirits as well.

It's only been about three weeks since you were released.

Yes.

You have spent more time in prison than anyone else for your support of Palestine.

41 years.

That makes you the longest-serving political prisoner in French and European history. Before we dive into the details of your case, how are you readjusting to civilian life? It must be hard after 41 years in captivity.

I spent time in prison as a militant. I was surrounded by men and women dedicated to the cause who allowed me to keep resisting, by making my resistance part of the struggle against the genocide in Gaza. They gave me a permanent voice on the outside, allowing me to speak about the struggles of various peoples and other political prisoners. So, I wasn't just a prisoner. I was a fighter who was in prison.

I was a militant campaigning and fighting but who just happened to be behind

bars in a very particular set of circumstances. Today, I am that same fighter who, again, just happens to be fighting in another set of circumstances. Having those dedicated comrades who kept me in the fight, made my life and my struggle behind bars easier.

Let's talk about the details of your case. I've reported extensively on your case in recent years and on other political prisoners. Walk us through the timeline of events. You were in Lyon with an Algerian passport on you. You walk into a police station, and that's when they recognize you and figure out you were traveling under an assumed identity. So, it was issued by the Algerian government but under a different name to assist you. Initially, they lock you up for that, but then they find a weapons cache in Paris. Walk us through what happened.

I was arrested in Lyon and charged with criminal conspiracy. I was tried by the French courts which sentenced me to several years in prison. A deal was made with the French government, under which a French official [Gilles Peyroles] was released from captivity [in Lebanon]. Normally, I should have been freed in exchange. France gave its word but went back on it. The United States joined the case as a civil party, and from that point on it was more or less the US that dictated my fate.

If I could just rewind, when you entered the police station [in Lyon], it was because the Mossad was hunting you, right?

Regarding the details of the arrest, that whole episode dragged on for quite a bit. I had been on the run for three days, before I got to the point where I decided to enter the police station [to seek refuge].

Okay. Because, I was wondering, how did you pick up on the fact you were being hunted?

[The Mossad] had been hunting me since Milan. That pursuit lasted from Milan all the way to Lyon. I tried several things to try and throw them off my trail, but couldn't in the end, and when all else failed I got arrested. Indeed, I had an Algerian passport. A real passport. But unfortunately it didn't do me much good, because the French knew my real identity and arrested me. I was chased [by the Mossad] from Milan to Geneva and from Geneva to Lyon. And for two days in Lyon I tried to shake them off but couldn't.

How did you know that you were being hunted? That must be a terrifying experience.

It wasn't terrifying. I was just a fighter being pursued by an intelligence agency, one far more capable than that of the French or others. There were several [Mossad] teams that were hot on my trail. And ultimately I got captured. It wasn't some great feat. I tried to throw them off my trial but didn't succeed. My comrades couldn't intervene in time, so they arrested me.

Do you regret walking into that police station in order to shake them off? Since it led you down this whole path…

No, because at that moment I was probably about to get captured anyway. I was supposed to go through the train station, and my comrades hadn't showed up. And they were a few meters away from me. So rather than getting arrested there, I made a last-ditch attempt using the passport. I made up some story [to the police] and told them that someone was trying to rob me. But it was already too late by then. The ploy didn't work out. My fate was sealed.

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You later discovered that your first lawyer, Jean-Paul Mazurier, was a spy. Something he later revealed in a book. Were you shocked? How much damage did he do? What kind of information do you think he passed onto the French intelligence service?

It's the French justice system that should have been shocked. And yet that wasn't the case. That a lawyer is being paid off by the intelligence services… During the German occupation of France, even the Gestapo didn't stoop that low. And then this country that lectures everyone about democracy and the separation of powers, etc. should find itself directly implicated in a scandal like this is apparently normal. Not one, not a single magistrate had anything to say about it. That's the justice system for you in Western imperialist countries. It goes without saying that other countries aren't any better. When the interests of any imperialist system are at stake, the bourgeoisie always disregards their own laws. This isn't something unique to the French. All capitalist and imperialist states do this.

Back in the day, Maître [Jacques] Vergès was quite famous, and considered one of France's best lawyers. His reputation precedes him. He defended you as well. However, there was apparently something he didn't do [after the Mazurier spying scandal]. Should Vergès have requested a review of the criminal court's ruling?

I was the one who refused. Maître Vergès was a great lawyer, but he was a great fighter as well. He was an exceptional militant of a calibre far greater than most alive today. And quite naturally, he accepted my decision, and he respected it.

Why did you instruct him not to ask for a review?

Better to have this misconduct forever stain the French justice system than to overturn the proceedings.

So it was a strategic move.

Quite naturally, quite naturally. It would be better for the face of the capitalist and imperialist justice system to be unmasked by real-world examples. And it was. And yet not a single magistrate had anything to say.

There was also a series of bombings in France for which the media claimed you were responsible, yet the French intelligence services later said that you actually had nothing to do with it. So I wanted to put it to you directly.

People all over the world try to take advantage of the struggle between the French state, and the countries it tried to extort. There was a war [the Iran-Iraq war]. Naturally, I sided fully with those who resisted attempts by the French to coerce certain states in our region. So, it wasn't simply the police that were scandalous. The police have always been a tool of the imperialist judiciary and therefore imperialism itself. That's nothing new, and not the real scandal. What's truly scandalous is the press who willingly spread whatever the police tell them. Make no mistake about it. The media didn't hesitate to spread the police's propaganda [about me and FARL], which the judges had asked them to do. You have an entire global network of judges, police, and media all working together. And these media outlets only serve a specific class. The justice system is also designed to serve that specific class. Aside from making this or that person pay up, the point of the courts—which most people didn't even have access to until the 20th or 21st century—is so they can dole out lectures to everyone about morality. And as I said to the magistrate, it's always lovely to hear a prostitute talk about the virtues of virginity. Better once the client has their clothes back on.

I, however, wasn't extended the courtesy, as I stood before this magistrate, who couldn't figure out why I wouldn't defend myself. "Why won't you defend yourself? The prosecutor is asking for at least ten years? That's all you have to say? A statement in support of the Palestinian people, then you just turn your back and walk away?" I said, "Look, I'm here to defend the Palestinian cause, not to defend the justice system of your country. That's your job. And now you need to own it." Including the fact that my lawyer turned out to be secretly working for the intelligence services… "You had nothing to say? Even the Germans didn't behave like that when they occupied your country." Ultimately, none of this is out of the ordinary. Beneath the veneer, this is what the justice system and the media really are in imperialist countries. Of course, that doesn't mean that progressive media outlets can't exist here and there. But ultimately, most media outlets are the complete opposite, which is simply reprehensible. I was never actually charged with terrorism. I was put before a special tribunal for terrorism. There was no reclassification of the offense. That tells you everything you need to know about the justice system and its legal proceedings. These proceedings are a mockery of the legal system. Not just in my case, but with all prominent figures in the struggle.

So they could slap on this label of "terrorist."

Yet, when they arrested me, "terrorism" wasn't even a crime under the French legal system. But when I went before the tribunal, it was a special court that they set up just for that purpose. They didn't even attempt to reclassify the charge. In other words, the whole thing was a sham. The entire justice system is crooked.

Once again, I find your case incredible because it's like entering another universe, yet it's our universe.

Yes, yes. French imperialist propaganda is very strong. Everywhere they go, they present themselves as champions of the separation of powers, democracy, etc. But really, they're just like any other country, given everything we know: the close relationship between the justice system and the police, the class struggle.

How would you define the word "terrorism"?

Terrorism, in my opinion, is state terrorism. Terrorism is the use of violence against the masses. It is the use of violence against these who try to expose the underlying class struggle. Terrorism is the use of means and methods that put the masses in danger. Any government that represses its own people as a matter of policy is engaged in terrorism. I defended the actions of the Lebanese Armed Revolutionary Faction [FARL]. I considered it a great honor to have those operations attributed to me, and I considered it a great honor to defend the legitimacy of those operations, yesterday, today, tomorrow, and the day after.

FARL's operations never targeted civilians or the general public. There were some criminals. They were hunted down. Then they were eliminated. This cannot be described as terrorism. If you look at Lebanon in 1982, that's what terrorism is. When we talk about terrorism, we are talking about Sabra and Chatila. The Sabra and Chatila massacres aren't something that just happened on the sidelines. The French, American, and Italian imperialists know this. Mitterrand personally guaranteed the security of Sabra and Chatila. Reagan personally guaranteed the security of Sabra and Chatila, as did the Italian government. The French sent 800 soldiers, the US 800

marines, and the Italians 400 troops. So, you had 2,000 soldiers there to protect the camps, on condition that we, the militants and fighters, leave the camp.

Of course, back then, we were all young. We protested and cursed at everyone. But in the end, the leadership felt that France's word, the word of two permanent members of the United Nations Security Council could be trusted, that there was nothing to be worried about. After all this was France, the land of human rights, the Resistance, and the separation of powers. "It would never abandon the camp!" And yet we had barely pulled out of the camp when the soldiers began to clear the minefield around the camp, meaning they removed the protective barriers we had put in place. And then they withdrew for four days, during which the massacres took place. Four days later, they returned to "investigate the facts." Their facts. Not one single soldier was prosecuted.

Naturally, these French, American, and Italian soldiers were not some ragtag militia of vagabonds. They were given orders to withdraw which they followed and were then ordered to return, which they did. One of the first journalists to arrive in Sabra and Chatila was Jacques-Marie Bourget who reported on the extent of the slaughter. And he talks about the French officers in a little book, The Sabra and Chatila Massacre, and the discussions that took place. It is a stain on France. But above all, it is a stain on the French justice system, which lectures others about terrorism. Meanwhile 4,000 corpses or so—because they couldn't all be counted—weren't killed by gunfire. They were killed using knives, swords, and axes.

Apparently, that wasn't terrorism to them. In fact, they even committed to never prosecute anyone. Every year in France, we commemorate the massacre of Oradour-sur-Glane. The Nazis burned about 700 people in a church. Seven or eight children. Sabra and Chatila had over 4,000 victims. Did none of them deserve an investigation into why the international force withdrew, then moved back into position? When you look at these facts, for example, in 1982 there were around 32,000 casualties, attacked with cluster bombs in Beirut and elsewhere. The Israelis attacked Lebanon under the pretext of [Operation] "Peace in Galilee."

Those 32,000 casualties were caused by American weapons. They used Beirut and Lebanon as a testing ground for their weapons. Cluster bombs and vacuum bombs were used for the first time in the Middle East. Of course, none of this is terrorism according to the imperialists. And then [the United States] goes and joins the case against me in Paris as a civil party. These aren't people whose courts and judges can be taken seriously. The only thing you can do is turn your back to them. Let them go on pretending to be victims and spewing hatred against the struggling masses. And that's what happened.

I think that's an excellent definition of what constitutes terrorism. You were accused of killing those two diplomats.

Yes.

The Israeli diplomat [Barsimantov], it turns out, was in fact…

…the head of Mossad operations in Europe.

Right, because their jobs are usually a cover.

Yes, everyone knew [they were spies]. Even the prosecutors. And the American diplomat [Ray] was actually running CIA counterintelligence operations there. Those men were officers. And they got taken out nice and clean. Not a single civilian was harmed. Not even a hiccup. Because even revolutionaries can sometimes mess up. Not a single civilian was harmed. If justice had any meaning in France…. This is why the prosecutor asked for less than nine years. Usually he would have asked for much more. He asked for less than nine years, and yet I still got life. That tells you everything about this judicial farce.

I don't know if you saw this, a few weeks ago in the United States, two Israeli diplomats were…

Yes. They were assassinated by Elias Rodriguez. By a militant who felt that in the face of the genocide taking place in Gaza it is the duty of every revolutionary to respond with the means at their disposal. He happened to have a pistol at his disposal, so he iced two Israeli agents. In my opinion, it was necessary and the right thing to do. People's reactions may vary from one country to another, but, generally speaking, the massacres taking place in Gaza require a reaction commensurate with the situation in order to prevent things from becoming any worse.

Naturally, like all revolutionaries, I'm against any operations that might hurt the masses. But when faced with the images coming out of Gaza of half-dead, starving children, when you see what the US, Israel, and the Zionist West are doing, you can't stop people from reacting the way they do or expect them to always respond with politeness and restraint. If you care about preventing violence, or preventing more impassioned reactions, then it's up to the European and American revolutionaries in the West to do their duty. It's up to them, more than anyone else, to do what's required.

We have a genocide that's been going on for over 200 days. For the first time in history, a genocide is being watched by millions of men and women every day. It is a scandal that we haven't seen stronger reactions beyond the usual protests every week. Don't get me wrong, the youth coming out and making their voices and their anger heard is huge. It's invaluable and breathes new life into the Arab and global revolutionary movement. Nevertheless, when there is genocide, more is needed. We

hope for much more than that.

Today in the West and in Europe we're also seeing social democracy being chipped away at, which is reminiscent of certain periods in the last century. Today capitalism is in crisis. It has exhausted whatever pretenses of social democracy it had. We are standing on the edge of another world war for the third time in a century with Western capital as the main catalyst. We all know that there's only a couple of ways to prevent these wars. We need a revolutionary movement to prevent the masses in the West and elsewhere from ending up as cannon fodder. It is the duty of the proletariat, especially in the West, to take action. Naturally, that doesn't absolve these in the outer rim of the capitalist system of their own duties in this struggle. They also have important work to do.

And we hope to come through in a big way. If you look at the Resistance in Gaza and the West Bank, one can't help but admire their strength and steadfastness. Even after 17 years of the siege on Gaza and all the destruction wrought on Gaza and the West Bank, the Resistance lives on. The Resistance is so impressive that it makes even the most seasoned revolutionaries blush, be they in Strasbourg, Vietnam, or elsewhere. You see the fighters literally climb on top of the tanks and plant bombs there with their bare hands. That takes guts. Those are the same fighters whose brothers, wives, children, and grandchildren are all starving to death with the direct complicity of Western imperialist forces.

It is our right to ask European revolutionaries to also sacrifice for the cause and contribute in ways that will make a real difference. With that said, we can't ignore the current rise of fascism in Europe. It is taking root right there, out in the open. And not just in France, Germany, Spain, etc. It isn't just the AFD in Germany or Vox in Spain, or the National Front [in France], and so on. The rise of fascism isn't just some naughty phrase.

You even see it in the so-called Green and Liberal parties.

Fascism is on the rise everywhere, and it's getting worse by the day. It is very real and very dangerous and not just some naughty phrase. We're talking about reactionary forces regrouping and organizing themselves. Hopefully, a force for humanity, that is to say, the anti-capitalist forces are up to the task of confronting this looming threat. To fight fascism, we need to unite people of various political backgrounds and struggles under one banner. Because the current model that we have under social democracy is only capable of responding to a handful of challenges, but not much else.

Fascism today presents humanity with an almost insurmountable challenge. We are on the eve of yet another world war for the third time in the span of a century. This is capitalism. Capitalism today is nothing more than savagery. Nothing can come of capitalism except barbarism. We are at a critical juncture. It is up to every revolutionary to seize this moment and carry us forward into revolution. Only a revolution can stop the forces of capitalism from wreaking havoc on a global scale.

Hopefully, there is a movement already out there taking shape, one that people can actually place their faith in. This effort is the only thing deserving of all our hopes and prayers. Such a movement is the only thing that can prevent an explosion of fascist, reactionary violence on a global scale.

In England, around the same time that I was arrested under the Terrorism Act, and this crackdown on the press began, we also had the arrest and indictment of several activist from a group called Palestine Action. I don't know if you're familiar with them, but what they do is directly sabotage the weapons factories. What do you think of this strategy?

Yes, it is very important and effective. It's also critical in how it relates to the Global South. Every step forward one one side of the Mediterranean is a step forward on the other. We are all in this together. Either we will be victorious together or we won't be victorious at all. All these actions and demonstrations taking place in Europe, the reason they're important isn't just because they undermine the bourgeoisie of your country. Their value is the extent to which they inspire others [to do the same] on the other side of the Mediterranean.

When Egyptians look at England and see hundreds of thousands of people demonstrating in solidarity with Gaza, they cannot remain silent. It goes without saying, the state repression there is different from what it is in England, France, or elsewhere. But the more momentum there is for this struggle, the more engaged it makes revolutionaries everywhere, and the more effective it makes those in Egypt who are pushing for real change in the struggle against capitalism and imperialism. It's thanks to these protests and actions that we can mature as a movement, just as much in the Arab world as in the West. In other words, it's much easier for the leaders of the struggle in England to take up their role, knowing that their comrades in the Arab world, are also doing their part in the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist movement and who take this capitalism crisis seriously.

This is a global crisis. Any movement whose aim is to protect the masses from being turned into cannon fodder is a movement that is fighting for both sides of the Mediterranean, for Europeans and Arabs alike. We have an Arab world that stretches from the Atlantic to the Gulf. Change is coming at any moment now. All it takes is for a small spark to light a small twig in the field for the whole field to catch fire. We are closer today than ever before. Hopefully we see a united front. We need a joint effort with people on both shores of the Mediterranean working together. Only together will we emerge victorious. Only by working together will we we be able to establish a united front.

A convergence of struggles is mandatory. We owe it to history. A convergence of struggles is necessary to prevent war. War is no joke. War is a poison that threatens to destroy the entire planet. The crisis we face today is much worse than the one at the beginning of the 20th century. There are new protagonists and actors involved. At the start of the 20th century, we didn't have a climate crisis. Today, however, our planet faces an existential threat because of capitalism. Naturally, those at the forefront of the struggle must take this into consideration. Capitalism today is nothing short of total barbarism, death and destruction on every level. It is up to the leaders of the struggle to remember that and to work out a strategy to save us from this savagery.

I saw that when you landed at Beirut airport, the first thing you did was to insult, and rightly so, the passive governments of the Arab world. What message do you have for them, if there is anything left to even say?

The entire Arab bourgeoisie are directly involved in the genocide [in Gaza], every bit as much as the international bourgeoisie. They shall be swept away by the masses and all those itching for change and social reform in the same manner as the bourgeoisie were dealt with during other moments in history. Our fate and the fate of the entire human race is at stake here. Hopefully, time is on our side. Of course, we shouldn't forget that the number of victims is rising by the minute. Nevertheless, hopefully we will have enough time to get our act together as a social bloc.

The current [economic] system of reproduction and production, in the south of the Mediterranean, specifically in the Arab world, is incapable of providing the masses with basic subsistence. That means the collapse is near. So, hopefully we'll be able to get organized in time before the collapse happens, so that we don't end up with the same result as in 2011. In 2011 there was a seismic collapse. But we were not up to the task of leading as a social bloc, and unable to build on that momentum. Sure, there were some gains, but ultimately we failed to transform that revolution [the Arab Spring] into meaningful change that would have swept away all these crooks in power.

Yes, we'll circle back to that topic soon. I want to ask you, from a personal point of view as well, as I may end up in prison soon myself, what helped you stay strong in prison all those years?

I'm not strong. I wasn't strong. I was just a simple fighter who was fortunate to have the right men and women around me, who enabled me to keep resisting and to stay in the fight. Through them, I was able to be a fighter who just happened to be fighting in very specific conditions, rather than just a political prisoner. Being involved in the struggle in all these different capacities with its slogans, campaigning for this or that issue, whether for Palestine, for comrades imprisoned in Turkey or elsewhere, or with the liberation movement in Kanaky or elsewhere, allows you to still participate in the struggle as a militant, just in a unique set of circumstances.

Today I am no longer in prison, therefore the conditions of the fight change once again. But I remain the same fighter. It doesn't require superpowers. Everything hinges on the ability of your comrades outside of prison to integrate your resistance into the broader struggle. Everything depends on it. Naturally, you can't expect all your allies to have the exact same beliefs, or to come from a single, partisan bloc. It's through the convergence of struggles that these people find themselves together.

Naturally, your family, friends, and comrades, will want to get you out of prison as quickly as possible. But it's up to you as a fighter to put the cause first and not make concessions even if they seem trivial, things which you, as a militant, wouldn't find that trivial anyway. Spending years in prison is hard, of course. There are many in that situation. It's not easy to be locked up for years and to stand firm in your principles right up until the moment you walk out the gate.

I was asked, for example, to make concessions that might seem trivial to an outsider. But it wasn't trivial. I remember this little girl from Al Badawi, a small refugee camp in northern Lebanon, who wrote me a letter. A little girl who was about 7 or 8 years old. She said to me, "Uncle, I was with my mom and dad this morning, and saw a poster of you on the wall. My parents were drinking coffee and talking about you, and I understood that they want you to say nice things about Israel. Just tell them that you like Israel very much so that they free you, and once you're out we can insult them."

It's a child's logic, and it touches you deeply. But of course, that's not an option. Some of the comrades, for example, told me, "Don't make a big deal about the civil parties to the case [the United States]. Just say a few words, a little something to show that you're thinking of the family of this soldier or that civilian." And you're on the brink of freedom. Because you know if you say what they want you to say, you can walk right out. And if you don't, they'll just keep you locked up. Naturally, giving in is not an option. Because what they call a "small gesture," is no small gesture at all.

To me, those acts of resistance were legitimate—today, tomorrow, and the day after. The whole reason they put me in prison, is precisely because I condone those acts of resistance. The imperialists act like the Resistance is some kind of violation of their sovereignty, meanwhile they trample on the sovereignty of our people all day long and no one bats an eye. I said that during the trial, and I said it yesterday too. The comrades had put some money together for me. They said, "Let's just be done with it so Georges can leave. The important thing is that he gets out. Once he's out he can insult them as he pleases," just like that child said. The prison authorities came to me and said, "Here's the money that was raised. How do you want to divide it up?" In other words, give this money to the Americans, to the families of the soldiers as compensation. Naturally, I refused. I didn't ask for this money. This money wasn't mine.

All Americans, civilians and military alike, are implicated in the genocide in Gaza which is unfolding before the eyes of the world. I consider them, their families, their loved ones, their neighbors, and their entire country to be accomplices in the genocide of our children. So I told them, do whatever you like with that money, it's not mine and I don't want it. A few days later, more money arrived. They came to me and tried the same act again. And I gave them the same answer as before. Although I may have gotten a little carried away, because I thought it was quite rude to ask that of me after 41 years in captivity. Since the French and Americans felt I had disrespected them in some way, they went and told the president of the court. They said, "Look, he just won't do it," and so on.

Finally, the president of the court goes, "It's been 41 years, he hasn't changed, and he's never going to change. He's told you the money isn't his and he doesn't want to dole it out." By the way, I'm not allowed, legally speaking, to even give that money away. This is the "performative justice" I spoke of earlier. Under the law, I'm not allowed to collect money to compensate a civil party. But for the sake of making me capitulate, they made an exception. Under French law, I'm not allowed to raise money in order to pay compensation. According to the law, it's forbidden. But to humiliate me and make me grovel, they were willing to allow it. Once I declined to compensate the civil parties, they lashed out by going to the Supreme Court.

They asked the Supreme Court to block my release before a binding judgment to release me had even been made. They Court of Appeals said [in February], "We will discuss Mr. Abdallah's fate on the 19th of June." And the public prosecutor, meaning the French government, goes to the Supreme Court and appeals against a decree that wasn't even a judgement yet. How can you go to the Supreme Court when there's no final judgment to appeal against? Naturally, a few days later, they said the appeal was invalid, etc. And once the court ruled in favor of me, they immediately lodged another appeal. Meaning there's still an appeal today in France against my release. But I'm here now.

It's this performative justice that every militant needs to be aware of. It's got nothing to do with how nice or mean you are. That's not what determines whether you get out of prison. The determining factor is how invested and active you are in the struggle. The more you play your part, the more the balance of power shifts in your favor. If the balance of power isn't in your favor, you're going to be stuck in prison. You need to be prepared to accept that. That is your role as a fighter. Nothing else. And once the balance of power finally shifts your way, the bourgeoisie will no longer be able to keep you locked up and will have no choice but to let you walk. And you come out with your principles intact.

Walking out of prison still standing by your principles is a great victory. That's what happened. And I'm happy with the outcome, despite the time spent in prison. It wasn't so bad. There are hundreds of thousands of people who go up in smoke and I could have easily been one of them. But I'm still here.

To be frank, wasn't the balance of power more in your favor toward the beginning when they tried to free you through a hostage deal and with the bombing campaign, etc.? So why didn't that result in you being freed?

It was the pressure from the Americans.

So despite all the pressure you put on the French, the Americans exerted even more?

It wasn't only the US. The French government also felt that they could get away with leaving me in prison and go back on their word [in the hostage deal] because of their interests in the region, because my name is Georges, etc. And because of how French claims to love Lebanon, and particularly people named Georges [i.e. Christians]. It behaved just as one would expect. France is in a very poor position to be doling out advice regarding our country's resistance. Today, France, the US and others are pushing the Lebanese government to disarm the Resistance. To dissolve and disarm the resistance.

These are the same people who a few months ago honored [Missak] Manouchian. Manouchian was considered the figurehead of the so-called Affiche Rouge [FTP-MOI] by the "special section" of the Paris courts of the Vichy regime. The French basically resurrected this court in 2003 following the decision of the parole court in Pau to release me. The magistrate naively believed that he actually had any power as a judge. As soon as he decided to release me, Dominque Perben [then Minister of Justice] came to put him in his place, to remind him that a judge's place in this capitalist country is to do what you're told.

The order to release me was overturned, effectively resurrecting the "special section" of Paris, because from that moment on, you had a magistrate doing the bidding of the Minister of the Interior in Paris, who dictates to the courts what to do with political prisoners, dubbed "terrorists" or otherwise. This is the justice system. Not just in France, but in all capitalist countries. It is the duty of every revolutionary to rip its mask off. It goes without saying, prison is tough. Life in prison is extremely challenging. But a fighter doesn't shy away from difficult things. He does what it takes to fulfill his duty, especially if he is a communist.

Why did the Americans want to keep you locked up in prison so badly?

The Americans, like all imperialist powers, consider any affront against their interests, be they military personnel or otherwise… Ultimately what they care about is maintaining control of our country and the region. If getting rid of this or that person

helps, then they'll do it.

Simply because they can?

If they're able to, they'll simply do it. There's nothing to it. [France's Minister of Security] Robert Pandraud made an offer to CIA Director William Casey. The CIA Director came to Paris and told Pandraud, "If you ever release Abdallah, we'll cut ties with France." Pandraud replied, "Why don't we release Abdallah and give you his whereabouts in Beirut? You're a powerful nation, just eliminate him." Those are their true colors. Their behavior says it all. This is how their justice system really functions. That's the real takeaway from my case and the only silver lining.

There was nothing heroic about it. I'm just a simple fighter who stays the course and was fortunate to have comrades devoted to the struggle who enabled him to keep resisting. With that said, prison is very difficult. A prisoner isn't just some piece of meat. When you've got one kilo of meat, you can just put it in the fridge, and you know it won't go bad. A fighter, however, is not a piece of meat. He needs to remain in the fight as a part of the actual struggle taking place outside on the ground.

This is a real struggle, not some illusion. When we talk about the rise of fascism, this is a real, ongoing phenomena. When we talk about the genocide in Gaza, we're talking about a literal ongoing genocide. Therefore, it all comes down to the ability of your comrades to provide you all avenues to keep fighting [from inside prison] and remain a part of the struggle. And that's what happened. It's no different or any more heroic than any other comrade taking part in the struggle on the outside. Moreover, it's this mechanism that will shift the balance of power in your favor.

In the beginning, there were 200-300 people protesting for my release. During the last demonstration which took place in Paris there were roughly 7,000. What did the magistrate who ordered my release say? She said the main reason for my release was that "Georges Ibrahim Abdallah in prison is a far greater threat to public order than Georges Ibrahim Abdallah outside of prison." It's up to the authorities to follow up on his activities outside prison. He's no longer the justice system's problem." Meaning [it's now up to] the intelligence services.

The balance of power is the only thing that can get a militant out of prison, be they Georges Abdallah or anyone else. When the judge sad, "He poses a greater threat to public order from inside prison," she's referring to all the people that have come together to protest for my freedom, which in turn strengthens the broader struggle. You'll recall that in France barely ten months ago wearing a keffiyeh was a crime. Carrying a Palestinian flag would get you prosecuted. Yet today there isn't a single city in France or Europe that doesn't have weekly protests full of Palestinian flags, full of keffiyehs, the symbol of freedom.

This is the stuff that gets a militant out of prison. The campaign for their freedom serves as a bridge or vehicle to get people out in the streets and therefore for the broader struggle. And I must say I'm quite satisfied with the outcome. In my case, the police chief [of Hautes-Pyrénées] tried to ban the last protest, which was held outside the prison. However he couldn't ban it directly, so he asked the mayor of Lannemezan to do it, who replied, "I won't do it." So he tried to do it himself. There was a whole administrative process that kicked off, but he could't ban it ultimately.

This brings us back to the issue of the rise of fascism. In France, the rise of fascism is characterized by a weakened central government, which may sound weird at first, because fascism usually involves an authoritarian, centralized government. But in this case the state is falling apart. The state has abdicated its duties towards the educational and health systems. Everything is crumbling. Instead, they state is busy asking police chiefs to suppress dissent among the people.

In every region in France, each police chief has an entire police force at their fingertips. Each municipality can also sanction—call it what you like—a militia or auxiliary police force. There's also an increase in organized vigilantism and "neighborhood watches," who keep tabs on who's coming and going, "That guy had long hair and wasn't very white-looking," etc. This is all part of the rise of fascism. Naturally, the Left in Europe and in France need to beware and get their act together in order to counter the growing threat of fascism. As I said at the beginning, the rise of fascism isn't just some nasty phrase. It means heads are going to roll, and we and our comrades need to be ready to confront it.

Georges, if a may move on to geopolitics. What was your reaction to the assassinations of [Hassan] Nasrallah and [Ismael] Haniyeh?

Nasrallah, and all the leaders of the Resistance, were targeted by the imperialist and Zionist forces, with the full complicity of all the Empire's intelligence services, who provided their whereabouts. Naturally, Nasrallah was not just the leader of the Resistance. He was an emblematic figure fully committed to the cause. Some may disagree with this or that issue, but no one can deny that he was the strategic mastermind of the Resistance, an unrivaled figure.

To learn that he fell in battle, as a martyr, is naturally very painful, especially when you're in prison. But at the same time, it's bitter-sweet. Because when the leaders of the Resistance are willing to put their lives on the line and are martyred in battle, it invigorates and strengthens the entire Resistance. You can't piss on the blood of martyrs. Today more than ever the Resistance stands firm in its principles. A resistance whose leaders give their lives in battle will never make concessions in vain or piss away the blood of their martyrs. You really have to be nuts, like some in my country's government, to think that this Resistance, which has given its best people, is simply going to lay down its arms.

I have full confidence in the ability of the Resistance, which is the sole legitimate authority. When you are under foreign military occupation, the legitimacy of the Resistance takes precedence over anything else. The Resistance protects the people's very dignity and freedom. And only those involved in the struggle have the right to discuss what strategies the Resistance should adopt, not those on the sidelines, who stand idly by while the enemy tries to crush the Resistance. The only reason these traitors are allowed to run their mouths is by the grace of the Resistance. It is nothing more than a courtesy—a humanitarian gesture which some may even disagree with, as they probably don't deserve it.

But in any case the Resistance is strong and will emerge even stronger. It is the Resistance more than anyone else that wants us to have a strong national army that protects us. It has a greater interest more than anyone in the struggle to want a strong [Lebanese] state that respects its countrymen and the citizens of this country, regardless of religion or ethnicity, etc. The Resistance is the only way for us to prevent the Balkanization of the region. The region today is being carved up and divided. We all see what's happening in Syria. The Americans, together with the Israelis and other Arab reactionaries, are destroying everything that we've achieved historically. The state itself is a construct that was won through hard-fought struggles.

Instead, they are working to decimate this state and all its institutions, turning the region into chaos where ethnic groups, religious minorities, and barbarians devour each other while the Israelis and Americans sit back and decide which "human-animals" are worthy of their protection today and which ones will be sacrificed. Thanks to the Resistance, Lebanon is well-defended and far more capable than our enemies had hoped. The Resistance will not allow them to divide and Balkanize us. Lebanon and everyone in it will be victorious together. We all know that the only path to victory is together. The leaders of the Resistance are more qualified than anyone to bring everyone together under one tent, in order to unify the Lebanese people, strengthen their state, and build up their army.

The Americans, French, and British keep telling us that they are Lebanon's friends. They're no friends of ours. We say to them, "If you're truly our friends, then provide the Lebanese army with weapons." That's all we ask. Let them give the Lebanese army the jets and anti-aircraft missile it needs and we'll be grateful. We're not asking them to obtain weapons for us from [North] Korea, China, Russia, or elsewhere. If you're really Lebanon's friends, then arm the Lebanese Armed Forces, so we have a real national army instead of militias. Of course, the bourgeoisie and their political pawns are the enemies of our army. They do not want us to have a national army. They do not want us to have a nation state. They want a bunch of thugs and bandits running around that they can use to bring our people to their knees.

Our people will never recognize the Zionist entity. The Zionist entity is on its last legs. Contrary to what they want you to believe, Israel today is living on borrowed time. The West that created this state—because the Zionist entity is nothing more than an organic extension of the imperialist West—there isn't a single [Western] government out there today that can defend Israel in front of the masses. Not because any of them care about the Palestinians. On the contrary, they want the entity to hurry up and kill as many Palestinians as possible as quickly as possible. But in front of the European masses, they're unable to portray the entity as a beacon of human rights and democracy, etc. They try to spin it nowadays by saying, "It's not all Israelis, it's just Netanyahu and a few bad apples." Naturally, the European masses aren't having any of it. No one is fooled. In fact, they're coming out in even greater numbers. And our people are grateful to them for their mobilization, because it is very dear to us.

Georges, as you know I am English through my father's side and from my mother's side, Syrian Christian. I was born in Syria. Syria fell when you were in prison and I know that you were also a member of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party [SSNP]. What was your reaction to the fall of Syria?

Looking back, it's clear that there was a point when the Syrian bourgeoisie started to look after its own interests while destroying the people. Sure, the Syrian bourgeoisie developed the country in some ways, such as agrarian reform and by industrializing some parts of the country. They implemented some reforms in the health, education, and agricultural sectors, etc. They succeeded in establishing themselves as a state-bourgeoisie. However, once they normalized relations with the global capitalist system, this state-bourgeoisie fell into decline and became repressive against the people. And we, the progressive forces, were unable to turn it around.

Instead, the darkest and most reactionary forces in our history took power, with the direct support of Israel, the US, and other players who then turn around and pretend to condemn terrorism. [President] Hollande and [Foreign Minister] Fabius told Al Nusra [Al Qaeda], "Great job!" as they set off bombs in Damascus. When the Bataclan was attacked, they called it terrorism, and yet, today, the French were among the first to recognize this [Syrian] government. The Syrian people have a very long history. And right now they are going through a difficult period. I have no doubt that progressive forces will emerge in Syria and rise to the challenge. Of course it won't be easy. There will be widespread destruction and many martyrs.

We in Lebanon have the means to fight back against such things, contrary to what the Americans and others think. We will not allow Lebanon to be Balkanized. The Resistance is strong enough to fight it. The various political factions in the country, from the communists to the socialists, Al-Mourabitoun, the Arab nationalists, and the Resistance [Hezbollah], etc. are capable of pushing back, and they will. They are up to the task, and our country will be victorious. Without a doubt.

Georges, you come from a Christian background, as do I. Many leaders in the struggle against Zionism also come from a Christian background, like Georges Habash, Ghassan Kanafani, Antoun Saadeh, Bishop Capucci, Hanan Ashrawi, etc. who founded or helped lead many anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist political projects. Why do you think the West glosses over them and refuses to see this as a national struggle portraying it instead as a religious conflict?

They don't just see it as a religious war, they're trying to provoke a religious war. It's not by mistake. They know exactly what they're doing and will go to any lengths to destroy the fabric of our society. That's why they look for sellouts from our region to help them stir up religious hatred and provoke massacres that weaken our communities.

Because they always say it's "Jews vs Muslims," instead of saying it's an anti-colonial struggle.

It's not about Jews vs Muslims. Israel isn't a Jewish issue either. If you look at the United States today, roughly 30-35% of the Jewish youth are out protesting, wearing keffiyehs, and saying that the Zionist entity is a greater enemy to Judaism than Palestinians. So, no, this is not a religious conflict. Otherwise the Saudis and the Gulf would be at the forefront of the struggle instead of being complicit in the ongoing genocide in Gaza. This conflict is not sectarian. Israel is an organic extension of the imperialist West.

People need to have the courage to see the West for what it is. That it has a history of wiping out entire peoples. When we talk about Western imperialism, look at how North America became the United States, for example. The United States was built on the corpses of 20-25 million Native North Americans. When you look at so-called "Latin" America, or Central and South America, in what way are the Mayans and others "Latin"? The Latinization of South America, meaning the death and destruction of the native population, claimed the lives of millions of men and women. This is the legacy and foundation of the imperialist West. When you look at Australia, Aboriginal Australians, the indigenous people of Australia, are the earth's oldest continuing civilization. They were decimated. Today all that's left are few tourist sites. This is Western imperialism.

Western imperialism, however, did not succeed in our legion [in the Levant] despite a century of Zionists trying to colonize our land, which began in the period between the late-19th century and mid-20th century, and was fully supported by all the great powers of the imperialist West. What happened? The Palestinians remained. In 1949 the Palestinian population was barely 1 million. Despite a century of Zionist colonization, the Palestinian population today in historical Palestine is 7,300,000 and counting. While the Israeli settlers who've been pouring in for over a century number around 7,200,000. That means there are fewer Zionist settlers than there are Palestinian natives. On top of that you've got all the Palestinians in the diaspora and neighboring countries who were driven out of their homes in the Nakba. That means the Palestinians today number around 14 million in total.

This is a people who in spite of the permanent genocide waged against them have fought back, multiplied several times over, and number around 14 million today. They have failed in their attempts to erase the Palestinian people. With that said, Israel should not be considered peaceful or harmless. It is incapable of peace. Israel has always been and still remains a fascist country. And it grows more fascist by the day. The global rise of fascism that we see today is a natural extension of the imperialist West. You see this phenomena everywhere in the West. You've got the AFD in Germany, the National Front in France, Vox in Spain, and in Portugal it's even worse. This is all happening out in the open. And when it comes to the Empire's outposts, their fascist nature sticks out even more.

You see it in the way the Israel treats native Palestinians as human animals and openly describe them as such. Even the Nazis didn't go so far as to openly say it. Even if they behaved the same way, they didn't proudly announce it. Today, Israel is on its last legs. It has nothing to lose anymore. So it is hitting the Palestinians with all its cruelty and everything its got. But the Palestinian people are not alone. Just next door there are 400 million Arabs who share the same food, the same prayers, the same wedding ceremonies, and the same history, etc. The Palestinian people will not be eliminated. The Palestinian people will be victorious. The Palestinian people and their struggle are the driving force behind the Arab revolution. Palestine isn't just an area of 27,00 square kilometers. Palestine is the driving force of the Arab revolution from the Atlantic to the Gulf. Make no mistake, the Arab revolution will succeed thanks to the heroic resistance of the Palestinian people and others.

I was in France, I believe, at the same time that you were released. I visited the museum of the French Resistance. As you know I grew up idolizing figures like Jean Moulin, [Massik] Manouchian, etc. and this whole culture of the resistance, as I believe you and many others did as well. How is it that the French recognize they were under German occupation and were able to identify a military occupation and to fight it. But when it comes to this struggle against Zionism they change positions?

I don't think they really changed. If you look at France today, those who support Palestine are no small minority. Take for example the stance of the French Communist Party or Le France Insoumise (LFI). That's not insignificant. If you look at French Parliament, Le France Insoumise have 80 MPs who stand fully with the Palestinians. Same with the communists, anarchists, Revolution Permanente (RP), and other groups. Obviously that's not the case in the imperialist media, which is to be expected. They lie and obfuscate, that's what they do. It's no conspiracy theory to say

that. The imperialist media are doing what they do, which is to justify the unjustifiable.

Capitalism in this country can only bring death. Resistance in its various forms can only fuel the momentum of revolution, whether in France or elsewhere. Of course, this is no walk in the park. Capitalism is in crisis on a global scale. It is up to the leaders of the struggle to unite people of various backgrounds and struggles under one banner and use that momentum in order to lead the revolution to victory, whether in Europe or in the Arab world. An hopefully victory is near.

Georges what message would you give to this generation and future generations of revolutionaries?

Firstly, I salute and commend the European youth for rising to the occasion for taking to the streets and standing firm in support of Palestine and against the genocide in Gaza. This is the most important and potent political stance of our time. I say to the youth of today, be careful. Fascism is on the rise. This is a very real criminal undertaking that is happening in real time. You need to be ready, because it's up to you to confront it. Do not waver. You can do this and you have the numbers and the strength for it.

Greetings to all the comrades and activists who helped make the Palestinian liberation movement so bright and powerful. Palestine has never been more relevant and important than it is today, and it is thanks to the youth who are out in the streets all across Europe.

Georges Abdallah, thank you for your time and for receiving me to conduct this interview

It is to you your comrades and your viewers that I extend my heartfelt congratulations and thanks.

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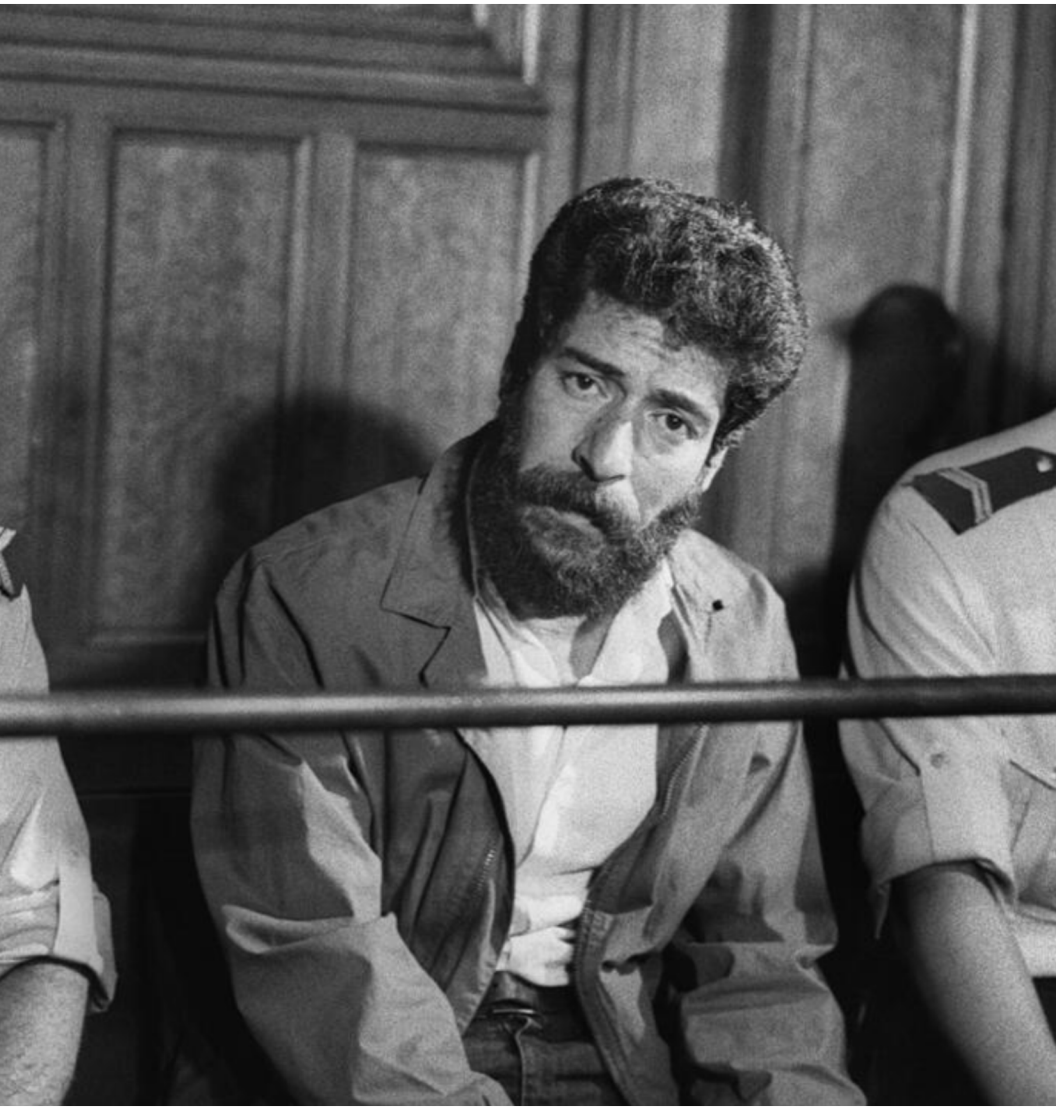

II

'No Heaven without Gaza': A Palestine Chronicle Exclusive Interview with Lebanese Revolutionary Georges Abdallah, by Samaa Abu Sharar

August 14, 2025

'Prison Does Not Change Fighters'

We all know George Abdallah as an international activist who dedicated his life to just causes, most notably the Palestinian cause and the fight against colonialism in all its forms. How would you present yourself?

I am a fighter amongst our Arab fighters, a fighter of the Palestinian revolution, and a fighter of the Lebanese resistance against imperialist and Zionist oppression. Our activism stems from our assessment that the Zionist entity is an organic extension of Western imperialism. We consider that this entity has currently reached the final chapter of its existence, and, therefore, it will unleash all its barbaric and murderous reserves on our people. The masses of our people must prepare for this stage, keeping in mind that they will prevail over this entity.

What you say is completely in line with how many people view you: as an icon of resistance who represents the correct compass of our great struggle. So there is no difference between how Georges Abdallah sees himself and how people see him.

Our people have great confidence in the Palestinian resistance, so any expression of resistance is highly esteemed. Our people are prepared to provide a lot of support and facilitate the struggle. What is happening in Gaza and the West Bank today confirms this. As an ordinary fighter in the ranks of the resistance, historically, I see that our people are steadfast. There are loopholes, as always happens in revolutions, but this does not stop us. The masses in Gaza embrace their emaciated children, continue to resist, and refuse to raise the white flag. Thus, we can say that the resistance is in great shape despite all the subjective and objective problems.

Did prison change you?

Prison does not change fighters. In reality, prison helps shape sound positions if the required solidarity from resistance forces is available, and this is what happened with me.

This means that Georges Abdallah, who was imprisoned 41 years ago, came out of prison the same man?

An older fighter, with more experience and more willingness to give.

How did you relate to time while in prison?

In fact, time in prison for fighters and activists is a framework within which life's priorities are organized. If the activist has found solidarity—in other words, if he has a group of people who make solidarity a practical expression within the daily struggle of our nation's masses—then the imprisoned activist is simply a fighter doing what he must under exceptional circumstances.

Time becomes tight, as he doesn't have enough time to do whatever he deems appropriate to support the struggle, whether in terms of reading, interventions, or other things. This applied to me.

So, time was tight for you in prison?

Time was not sufficient to do what is required of fighters and activists. I did all I could within my modest capabilities.

You said in your interview with Al Mayadeen that your day in prison was very organized and that you had a daily schedule that involved much reading of the mail you received. With whom did you correspond while in prison?

With fighters and activists who were in prison or remained in prison, with my family, and with friends. This is normal, considering there were facilities that were secured through the struggle of the masses in this country or that. In French prisons, a telephone was made available to call whomever you wish, provided you gave the number to the relevant authorities. Accordingly, you could contact anyone you wished.

Books were provided by comrades, so you had ample opportunities for reading and doing other things. However, it takes a lot of time to read everything that needs to be read and to participate in the ongoing debate on these matters.

Were you one of the people who made many phone calls?

One of the people who did what he had to do.

Were the phone calls more with friends or family members?

The family was certainly within the circle of communication. There is a continuum, so to speak, that extends from home to the arena of struggle. The concerns of the homeland are an essential part of my life, so communication is constant through family, friends, loved ones, and all other expressions of struggle present in our country and abroad. I did not feel alienated in this regard.

Were you subjected to any psychological or physical violations while in prison?

I was subjected to everything fighters and activists are subjected to. I can say that all the procedures didn't constitute a problem for me. In other words, from a personal perspective, I wasn't subjected to any particular pressure, and from an objective perspective, I had plenty of resources that were made available by my numerous comrades.

There were a large number of comrades, and they alternated so they could all come to see me in prison. Therefore, I never experienced the feeling of alienation or isolation. The solidarity movement is part of the daily struggle; therefore, there was no personal anguish in that sense. There is a struggle with time. I wanted to use all of this time to enhance my readings and interventions for as long as possible. However, there are limits to this time because of life's priorities.

What did you miss most while in prison, besides freedom, of course?

In reality, I missed all aspects of life and all its expressions.

Such as?

Everything. It's not easy to say what I missed most: family, loved ones, the stars, the trees, and the animals. You miss the comrades, you miss your discussions with them; there is no set priority.

If you could go back in time, is there anything you would have done differently in your struggle?

I am not currently engaging in self-criticism of my struggle. Throughout my struggle, I have done everything I consider appropriate for the path of struggle. Certainly, as with everyone else, there are successes and failures, and there is the possibility to improve this or that.

However, overall, I am satisfied with my path of struggle. Despite its modesty, it is acceptable as any other fighter or activist of our people within the framework of the available popular base.

'The Resistance is in Great Shape'

Let's talk about Palestine and Lebanon. You said in more than one interview that solidarity with Georges Abdallah was equal to, or part of, solidarity with Palestine.

Solidarity with Georges Abdallah only takes on meaning when it falls within the framework of the struggle against the war of genocide in Gaza. This is within the path of struggle that falls under the issues of solidarity, not outside this framework or parallel to it. It falls within this framework, and I think it was very effective.

In your opinion, if it weren't for the "Al Aqsa Flood" operation, would you be among us today?

The "Al Aqsa Flood" is a very important operation. However, my case does not fall within this framework without going into details of the "Al Aqsa Flood" operation. The "Al Aqsa Flood" operation is very good in terms of its timing and effectiveness. Although we may find a loophole here or there, we are not in a position to beat ourselves up; we are in a position to evaluate the operation itself.

This operation came at the right time, is very appropriate, and has moved the struggle forward, placing new responsibilities on the shoulders of those who carried it out and lived it. I hope that the comrades within the framework of the Palestinian revolution will succeed in examining the national program of the Palestinian revolution. We know that there is a historical impasse facing the Palestinian national program.

Certainly, the "Al Aqsa Flood" operation has a role to play in clarifying some aspects and correcting some deviations. However, without resolving the crisis of the Palestinian national project, we will remain stuck and pay a heavy price. It is the responsibility of all forces in the Palestinian arena to work on overcoming this crisis because it is a crisis, not a matter of national or non-national unity. The crisis is deeper than that, and it is the responsibility of all active forces to do what they must to deserve to be part of the Palestinian national liberation movement.

What is this crisis?

The crisis affects all aspects of the entire Palestinian national project. Israel is an organic extension of Western imperialism. Israel is not a colony or merely a settlement. It is an organic extension of this imperialist West. Therefore, confronting this imperialist West requires confronting the crisis of the imperialist system in its capitalist form. Those who confront this organic extension must stand on a ground hostile to capitalism.

Therefore, the leadership of the Palestinian bourgeoisie, in its various expressions —Islamic, nationalist, semi-nationalist, state-oriented, etc.—faces a problem in this regard. And the Palestinian left is in a very embarrassing situation, having so far been unable to build a national unity to confront this organic extension and failed to affirm national unity. Of course, these are great responsibilities that fall on everyone's shoulders.

Nevertheless, the resistance is in great shape. The masses of our people continue to confront the Zionist enemy with great and advanced effectiveness, although the children of Gaza are emaciated and in dire need of a glass of milk. However, Gaza will not raise the white flag, and this is a very important issue. As for how we move forward, that is a matter for the Palestinian leadership to determine.

But we are keen to hear what you have to say in this regard!

Everyone is concerned, but the actual leaders of the Palestinian revolution know best and are required to answer a number of questions. They are required to provide an answer on the crisis of this national project, the Oslo crisis, the crisis of the Palestinian Authority, the crisis of the division between Fatah and Hamas, the crisis of the dispersion of Palestinian forces, the crisis of the retirement of entire organizations that have been transformed into names without titles, the crisis of the mother of the Palestinian revolution, Fatah.

Where is Fatah and what is Fatah now? Where is Fatah and where is Hamas? What are they both doing? The crisis is complex and has numerous aspects. The Palestinian people have the intellectual, organizational, and resistance abilities to address this crisis, but a lot is required on all levels. It is not acceptable that there are around 60,000 full-time fighters with the Palestinian Authority whose task is limited to security coordination with Israel. And when we speak of national unity, which national unity are we talking about? A unity in which 60,000 fighters chase the Fedayeen (freedom fighters-PC) and hand them over to Israel, versus those who see their children dying of hunger and are still holding the flag! We all certainly know the dangers of a civil war, but the dilemma of the national project remains.

The leaders of all Palestinian organizations agreed on something at the Beijing conference, but what was its result? The result was the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh. Why assassinate Haniyeh? Because he was part of the wing in Hamas who called for unity. This does not mean that the Palestinian Authority welcomed the call. This is the crisis of the national project. Those who bear the responsibility are those in Palestine and outside of Palestine; they are the resistance fighters in Gaza and the West Bank, and even those who are part of the Palestinian Authority and inside the Israeli prisons. It is certainly a major crisis, but I am sure that the active members of Palestinian society will be able to overcome it.

'No Heaven without Gaza'

You spoke briefly about the "Al Aqsa Flood" operation. Were you surprised when you first heard about it?

The "Al Aqsa Flood" operation surprised everyone, and that in itself is an issue and falls within the scope of the crisis of the national project. This certainly does not undermine its value. "Al Aqsa Flood" marked a turning point in the history of the conflict with Israel, but it also imposes enormous responsibilities on everyone. The enemy is well aware that it is now in the final chapter of its existence; it is not a matter of a military setback. The "Al Aqsa Flood" operation is the first step in determining the priorities of this final chapter.

Everyone must rise to this responsibility, especially those in charge of the priorities of the struggle in Palestine and outside Palestine. The Arab street also bears a responsibility, and those in charge of the national project must ask the question: why this abandonment on the part of the Arab street?

The Palestinian leadership is no stranger to this abandonment. When Egypt and the UAE are playing the roles of mediators, how can we expect the Egyptian masses to apologize for not being at the forefront of the struggle? This is a tremendous crisis. The value of the Palestinian revolution lies in its role as a lever of the Arab revolution. It is the historical lever of the Arab revolution, but it is no longer playing its role for several reasons. The Palestinian leadership must answer why it abandoned this role.

I see Qatar, which hosts the main base of American imperialism, as a mediator. The question is: a mediator between whom and whom? I also see Egypt, with a population of 120 million Arabs, as a mediator. The same question applies. Egypt is Al Azhar (considered the largest Islamic institution in the Arab World-PC), and Al Azhar is not a tourist agency; it is a civilized institution that encompasses all the values of this nation with people of different colors. Eighty million people consider Al Azhar their (moral) authority. Where are the eighty million? Who is responsible for their inaction? Al Azhar is the one responsible for them. What has it done, and what is the role of the Palestinian revolution in this context?

It suffices that one of the eighty million, meaning one million, move toward Rafah and perform prayers there. They are not required to carry a gun and offer it to Hamas or the Popular Front (for the Liberation of Palestine – a socialist organization-PC) or any other faction; all they have to do is offer a cup of water or a cup of milk to the children of Gaza. Al Azhar is responsible for this inaction. It must know that its prayers are not accepted if they are not held at the crossing to Gaza. It must also be known that there is no path to heaven for all believers in Egypt because the children of Palestine have occupied all the roads while they are ascending to heaven. Those who wish to enter heaven must come to Gaza; otherwise, there is no heaven for them.

Al Azhar, along with the Sheikhs of Palestine and the leaders of the Islamic movements, know this all too well. They are the ones to determine whether Egypt is a mediator or a partner in this genocide. They also know whether Saudi Arabia and Mohammad Bin Abdallah are playing their role or not. The Kaaba of Mohammad Bin Abdallah is not an antique vessel; it embodies everything this nation has. Where is it in all this?

Do you agree with those who say that the Arab people are powerless, ruled by dictators and agents of the Israeli entity?

This is utterly unacceptable. The Arab regimes are not agents; they are actually participating in the ongoing genocide, and this is certainly not up for discussion. What I see, however, is that not a single person in Egypt was killed in the street while demonstrating, simply because they did not demonstrate. Where are they from young Greta, who came all the way from Sweden to raise a glass of water in solidarity with Gaza? Where are they from Rima Al Hassan, who came from Belgium and raised a glass of milk in solidarity with Gaza?

Where are the sailors of Egypt? These activists came in a boat not even fit to carry

fish, and the sailors of Egypt watch like "monkeys." Where is the Palestinian revolution in all this? Betrayal is in the entire Arab world; a demonstration in Yemen or in other Arab cities is not enough. Where is Jordan? Where are the masses of Jordan? Where are the 60% of the people of Amman who are originally Palestinians? Certainly, all this falls within the crisis of the national project, because these forces are responsible for national action. The Palestinian national action either works to elevate Palestine as a revolutionary lever for the entire Arab nation or works to shield these regimes.

Following the atrocities in Gaza, many who were believers in the resistance project have stopped being so. What do you say to that?

I don't see such people. I see parents in Gaza watching their children trembling as skeletons and still raising the red flag, not the white flag. Gaza has not yet raised the white flag, and the masses of Gaza will not leave Gaza. There is no time to self-flagellate or claim that morale has collapsed.

In Gaza, there are heroes. There are no people on this planet like those in Gaza. Gaza has been hit three times more than what hit Hiroshima was. 17,000 tons of explosives in Gaza, while Dresden in Germany was hit with 5,000 tons. Gaza did not surrender while Dresden fell. Today, there isn't a single city in Europe that does not raise the Palestinian keffiyeh, the symbol of freedom.

The Palestinian revolution has historically never been as prominent on the global stage as it is now. The problem remains in our national project, in our national leadership. The masses of the world, all over the planet, stand with Gaza. Do our leaders really stand with Gaza? When 30 to 35 percent of the Jewish youth in America raise the Palestinian keffiyeh and the Palestinian flag and declare that this Zionist entity is the enemy of the Jewish people and of Palestine, what does this mean? It means that the countdown to Israel's existence has started. Where are our leaders in all this? It's not enough for leaders to be martyred or chased after. They need to pinpoint the energy of the masses and be able to invest in it. Again, this is not happening because this is part of the crisis we spoke about.

Let us not forget that over 50 percent of the prisoners of the Palestinian revolution in Israeli jails are from Fatah, but it is also Fatah that brokered the Oslo Accords, and it is the one that caused the crisis of the national project. Nonetheless, Fatah remains the mother of martyrs, the mother of the revolution, and the mother of prisoners. This is the dilemma of the national project. How do we explain that over 50 percent of Fatah members are in Israeli captivity, while there are 60,000 Fatah fighters who are mercenaries under the command of (PA President Mahmoud) Abbas and others? This embodies the national project crisis.

These issues need to be addressed by the leadership of the Fatah movement. It is a reality we must confront. How will they confront it? The forces that lead the Palestinian struggle everywhere must answer these questions. They should also provide an answer regarding the status of our camps outside of Palestine and their fate. The Palestinian revolution is a revolution of camps. The Palestinian people are a people of camps. There are no Palestinian people without camps. Camps are the Palestinian identity. Where are our camps today? What is Sabra and Shatila today? What is the percentage of Palestinians inside the camp? What is their future? The relevant leaders must answer.

These places are semi-liberated in principle and are not places of security chaos as we are told. They are semi-liberated because they bear all the characteristics of the liberation of Palestine; they are not hubs that bear the characteristics of prostitution, drug smuggling, etc. Who bears the responsibility for the camps? Again, this is the crisis of the national project.

What will the scene in Palestine be like after the genocide in Gaza?

The genocide in Gaza will not continue. The genocide will not succeed, and Gaza and the West Bank will triumph as Israel witnesses the last chapter of its existence, and this is not a poetic speech.

You have repeated this in more than one interview.

I am not the only one to repeat it. We have to understand that Israel has never been through what it is currently going through; this is why it will use its entire barbaric stockpile on us. This will translate into intensifying its killing machine to the maximum. Israel will throw all its unexploited barbarism at our masses in the coming days, weeks, and months. What are the leaders of the national project going to do in light of this? How will those who planned the "Al Aqsa Flood" operation face this? These are questions that require answers from all factions.

When a leader like Yehya Sinwar falls as a martyr and not a fugitive in a shelter in Qatar or somewhere else, his resistance is bound to triumph. Our people's resistance will triumph. It will triumph because of people like Sinwar and Haniyeh who neither fled nor sought 'peace'. These leaders and their resistance cannot be defeated. Our people are aware of this and will not raise the white flag, neither in Gaza nor anywhere else. Accordingly, the responsibility of the current leaders is immense to find solutions for the national crisis. These solutions will inevitably come, although we surely regret that they are delayed because the human cost is immense.

Resolving the Left-Islamic Dilemma

Could the Gaza genocide kick-start a world revolution?

It is bound to happen, if not today, then tomorrow. The greatest responsibility falls on the shoulders of the leaders of the revolution; they are the ones to anticipate the next stage, not me.

How do you view the Islamic revolutions in the Arab world? Your approach seems to be different from many leftists. We have the impression that you view the issue from an operational perspective rather than an ideological one. Is this accurate?

We are not engaged in an ideological competition; we have Arab masses, the majority of whom are Muslim. This is the organic makeup of our nation. This is not an ideological choice. These people resist with whatever is at their disposal, be it the Quran, a scientific analysis, or a missile. It is the responsibility of those in charge of the struggle to determine what is at the disposal of the Arab masses.

When the Egyptian plays the mediator and the Qatari hosts the biggest American base, what message am I giving to the Arab masses? Do I expect that meeting with Egyptian intelligence, so they can coordinate with Qatari and American intelligence, will find me a way out of the revolution crisis or the national project crisis? I doubt it. All these actions contribute to the impasse we find ourselves in, including the inaction of the Arab masses.

Do you think there can be a meeting point between the left and the current Islamic revolutions?

All liberation movements have established a national project within which all societal actors work. Wherever a revolution triumphs, it does so through national unity. But that unity is not that of one person meeting with another; it actually entails the meeting of the entire popular bloc together to champion a project.

Let's take Al Azhar again. As any Arab or activist connected to Palestine, I don't view it in light of the relationship between Marxist ideology and Islamic ideology, but rather in view of its objective position within the framework of our people's movement. The same applies to Mecca. I don't look at it from an ideological perspective but rather from its significance to Muslims around the world. What have those in charge of the national project done with their 'Qiblah' to incite the masses of the world to move toward Palestine? I don't say this because I'm a communist or because I'm a believer; I say this as any person with the slightest connection to the conflict who looks at this matter and says, this is simply inconceivable.

Lebanon: Resisting vs 'Watching'

Moving to Lebanon, away from slogans, how do you see the situation there?

The situation is delicate, but it is also good. The resistance has sacrificed the best of its leaders as martyrs.

But there is a deep division in the country.

What we have in Lebanon is not different from any other country in the world. In all the resistance movements of the world, you will find people who will sacrifice themselves in defense of their country and cowards who simply watch. In the entire world, there isn't a country where the resistance enjoys the support of all the people. Sectarian affiliation is another issue, but I ask: who is behind the project that defends Lebanon's identity and dignity? The resistance. There is an occupation; thus, the resistance is the initial response. Outside of the resistance, there is no solution with a national character.

You can say all you want about this resistance—that it needs to represent all the Lebanese people, or it needs to be this or that. However, for you to have the right to speak, you must be on the side of the resistance, not the occupation. If you are on the side of the occupation, then you have no right to speak or even exist. When your country is under occupation, whoever stands with the enemy, regardless of their status or justifications, has no right to even exist.

So, what do we do with these people?

This is the responsibility of the resistance and the resistance masses: to figure out how to isolate the forces that cooperate with the enemy and open up to the masses of these forces. I did not spend a lifetime in captivity, nor did the martyr who sacrificed his life for the country, just to be labeled in the end as not representing the sovereignty of this country. Those who defend the homeland are the sovereignty of this country, not those who are ready to welcome Israel.

To say that there is a contradiction between the army and the resistance is wrong. In my opinion, as with any resistance fighter, our duty is to build a very strong national army to eliminate the justification for the existence of any resistance. This is our ambition. Our ambition is for a soldier to receive a decent salary—not twenty dollars per month—to be able to support his or her family and defend the country.

The leadership of the resistance should have the courage and clarity to open up to everyone with all its capabilities to build a national state that isolates all those who fail to fulfill their responsibility of sovereignty and defending the homeland for us all. A

homeland in which we are all safe; otherwise, we will all lose, and no party will triumph over the other.

So, until we build such an army, do you believe that the resistance should remain?

Certainly, what do we do otherwise? All over the world, resistance is the first response to any aggression. I hope we succeed at building a strong army able to defend us and one that replaces all resistance. But until this happens, do I remain naked in the face of Israel? Do I face Israel with a statement here and a statement there? I want an army that considers Israel the enemy.

Our soldiers are honorable; they are not members of a mafia. They are from all over Lebanon but they need to be well-trained and equipped to be able to defend the country and us. They tell us the US, France, and Britain are our friends. Brilliant, let them provide our army with weapons. But to come and tell me the US is our friend while it comes and asks us to surrender our weapons and recognize Israel, or otherwise Israel will slap you—this is unacceptable. I will continue to resist with all the means I have. The resistance should not have allowed itself to welcome the American envoy or anyone else. We, the people of this country, should meet and determine how to resist the enemy, not how to submit to the enemy. We meet to determine how to confront, not how to normalize.

Everyone is well aware of what is required of Lebanon today. Lebanon is asked to abandon its Arab identity, and particularly to abandon the issue of Palestine, and live in peace with the Zionist enemy. There will be no coexistence with this enemy, not today, not tomorrow, and not the day after. If someone stands with this normalization, the resistance will fight him. If a party stands with this normalization, it will also fight it. If a sect stands with normalization, the resistance will also fight it. Whoever wants to gamble can do so, but normalization will not happen because our people will not accept it, and our people are a resistant people.

The existing resistance might have certain flaws, and we might have certain reservations towards it. Go ahead and get me a better resistance. But to come and tell me this resistance is not good and that you'll bring me an Israeli soldier instead—then I will fight you and the Israeli soldier. It is as simple as that, despite the complexities of the situation in Lebanon.

We have a model meters away from us in Damascus, where the resistance project is being struck, and so is the state and society. They want Lebanon to turn into sects and tribes! They want to strike the state and the army and turn us into fighting militias, before America and Israel come to the rescue and tell each sect, "I will protect you from the other."

What is being proposed in Lebanon is the same as what is happening in Syria. This will be fought by our masses of the resistance. You want better resistance? Work on building a better one. But to come and tell me that you have to submit to Israel for the sake of the sovereignty of Lebanon—this is absurd. Sovereignty is not a suit; sovereignty is operational measures to protect the country. Israel occupies part of the Lebanese soil; what should I do? Some say you have to submit to it and you will live in peace. I tell them no, our people have historically offered millions of martyrs and have not and will not accept an alliance with this entity.

Finally, do you fear for your life?

No, I do not fear anything. Georges Abdallah is an ordinary citizen like all others and is not courageous, by the way.

How do you spend your time nowadays?

As you can see, I spend it between interviews and welcoming friends. Later on, I want to visit the camps and see my friends and find out the whereabouts of my people.

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